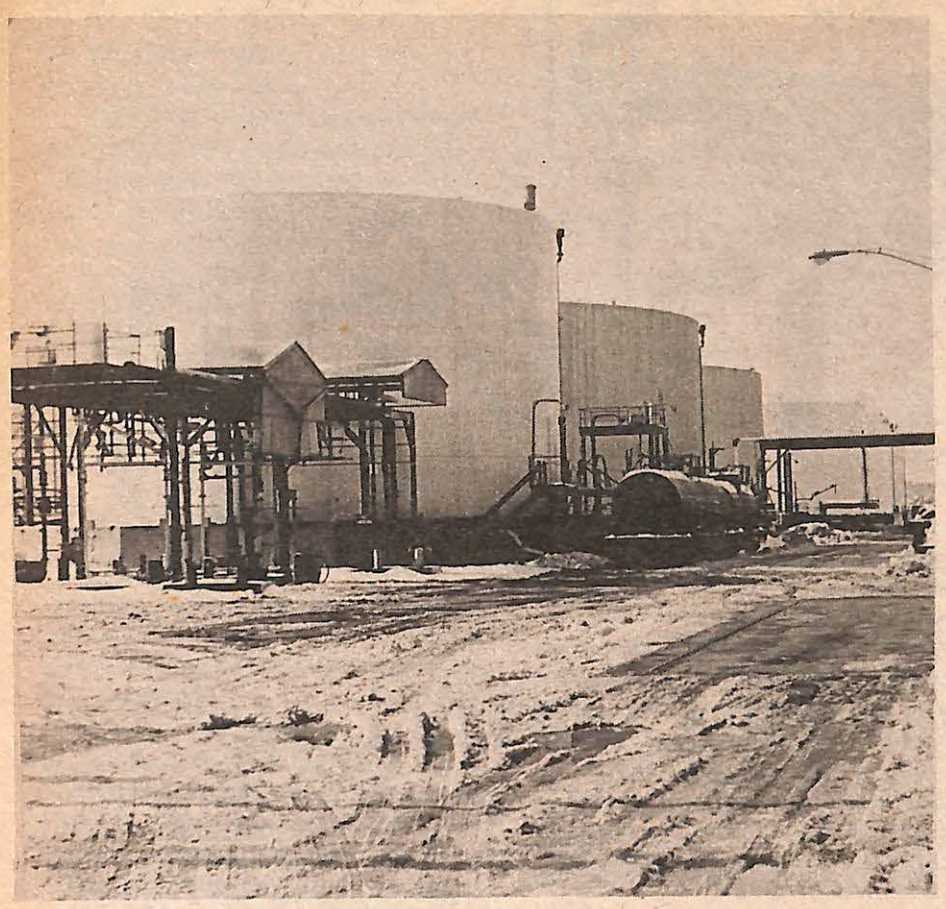
Just Who Do They Think They're Fueling?



Nick Heyer

New Haven's waterfront is ringed with fuel storage tanks. Major oil companies show figures indicating reserves are greater than last year. Yet prices go higher and higher for home heating oil and gasoline, and motorists find gas hard to get. Reasons? See AIM position in the accompanying article.

The "energy crisis" is a fraud. The current fuel shortage did not happen by chance – it was deliberately created by the major oil companies out of their own greed. That cold hard winter for us will mean cold, hard, cash to them.

A tiny huddle of oil millionaires have their hands on our themostats and in our gas tanks. Until we hand over what they want, they're not planning to let go. All the oil barons are asking of us is more money – lots of it – and also a free rein to destroy the environment. The seven major oil companies (EXXON, MOBILE, TEXACO, GULF, STANDARD OIL OF CALIFORNIA, SHELL, BRITISH PETROLEUM), which sell two thirds of the world's oil, are listing record profits this year. Among the big seven, the *lowest* profit increase over last year was a healthy 34%, while the highest increase was an unbelievable 438%.

At the same time, many environmental protection rules have been thrown out, including the ban on the Alaska pipeline and many clean air standards. But none of this stops the oil companies from asking for more. To make things even worse, some members of Congress are trying to use the so-called "energy crisis" as an excuse for turning the clock back in other areas, such as school bussing for integration. But just in case we don't agree, they've got their trigger fingers on the vital fuel supply.

see AIM, page 7

AIM Proposal #1

NO GASOLINE PRICE HIKES
NO SCHOOL CLOSINGS
NO INCREASE IN UTILITY RATES
NO ROLLBACK OF POLLUTION STANDARDS
ADEQUATE MASS TRANSIT
EXPOSE THE HOAX

MODERN TIMES

New Haven 20¢

Vol. IV, No. 16 "What you do is news!" Call 562-2510 January 15–31, 1974

Logue Proposes City Take Over New Haven Water Company in '77

by Andy Esposito
Modern Times Staff

The Board of Aldermen began 1974 the way it ended 1973. The January meeting, held on the 7th of the month, produced little substantial legislation.

There was only one interesting proposal made. Alderperson Frank Logue (D-18) offered a resolution requesting the board to consider buying the New Haven Water Company in 1977. Logue cited a 1902 contract between the city of New Haven and the water company which gives the city an option to buy the company's "property, assets, and franchises for just and fair compensation," at 25-year intervals begining with 1902. Also, the contract gives the city the option to acquire the organization when a majority of the members of the board of directors are non-city residents.

Land Valuable

Logue contends that the large amount of land owned by the water company is of great value to the city. He also feels this land will grow more valuable in the future. The 18th ward alderperson's resolution states that the acquisition of the water company will provide long term financial stability for the city.

The next step in the acquisition procedure will be for a public hearing to be held on the Logue resolution. No date for the meeting has, as yet, been set. The board will then vote on the resolution. If Logue's proposal is passed, a study committee will examine the economic consequence of municipalization.

Protective Reaction

Of course, the last thing water company President Charles Woods wants to see is the citizens of New Haven, through their elected officials, assume control of their vital water supply. Thus, while attempting to act "cool" by refusing to comment on the Logue resolution Woods, also, questioned the legal validity of the contract. In doing so he implies that a small handful of people have a right to control and make a profit off a resource which belongs to everyone.

However, the utilities of our community–water, gas, and electric–belong to all of us. They shouldn't be exploited for the profit of a small segment of the community. The water company would like us to believe that the opposite is true – that their stockholders should reap profits. Passage of Logue's resolution would be a small step in the right direction. It would allow the working people of New Haven to begin to reacquire control over their daily lives.

First Water – Then U.I.

New Haven's largest utility, United Illuminating (UI), should also be brought under municipal control. This proposal is not a new one. It was last made by Vincent Sirabella, President of the Greater New Haven Central Labor Council, during his 1971 mayoralty primary campaign.

There are legal provisoes, in Connecticut, which enable a city to take over a local utility. Nor, is such a takeover unheard of. Los Angeles, for example, has a municipally owned power company providing efficent, low cost service to one of the nation's largest cities.

The progress of Logue's resolution will be watched with much interest in many quarters. It could be the first step in a series of municipal acquisitions by which the citizens of New Haven begin to control their daily lives.

Nick Heyer

Here is a small part of what is presently water company property rather than being owned by the people of New Haven. Alderman Frank Logue (D-18) has proposed that the city excersise its option to own what should rightfully belong to all the people – the New Haven Water Company!

Inside

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Part 2: Greasing the Machine

Modern Times Staff

In our first article we described the pattern of campaign contributions to the Democratic Party in 1971. More than $100,000 was gathered, and the largest contributors were companies with city business--construction firms, architectural, engineering, and legal consultants, printing companies, and city job holders--like the Registrar of Voters and the Corporation Counsel. It is easy to understand why companies give money to the local ruling party. They want to ensure that they will continue to get city contracts.

But just what is the effect of contributions by Providence's Gilbane Construction Company or Hartford's Baldwin Electric Company on New Haven politics?

First, it means that neither the companies nor the politicians beholden to them have any real interest in keeping down city expenditures. Large contracts equal large profits and large profits equal large contributions. Thus we see buildings like the Coliseum with no real limit on their cost.

In turn, New Haven residents suffer as our taxes go up to pay for the city's monuments while needed public services like health, welfare, and education, are limited.

Second, it means that there is no control over the quality of work. The leaky roofs of New Haven's public buildings are legendary--Richard C. Lee High School is a prime example. But why should a company worry about quality when it is confident of continuing to receive city business?

Corruption

Third, it means that city politics is on the slippery slope of outright bribery and shakedown. What is the difference between a campaign contribution, understood by all as payment for a city contract, and a direct payment from a businessman to a politician? Only a technical one. Our late vice president got caught accepting direct payments and tried to justify them as just such campaign contributions. In such a moral atmosphere, everything has a price. No law means anything more than the bribery level of the official designated to enforce that law. We suffer not only through high cost and low quality of public service but in every aspect of government involvement like law enforcement.

Politicians and Money

If we can see the negative consequences of corporate contributions to political parties, why can't the local party chieftans? And why don't they do anything about it?

First, because they're businessmen

see CAMPAIGN, page 6

Women Wage Successful Suit

Sports Victory in the Court of Law

by Liz Henderson
Modern Times Staff

The sports scene is looking bright for women high school students in New Haven. As the result of a civil rights suit brought by a group of women coaches and students against the City there will be many new varsity teams for women. This is the first suit in the country against "a systematic pattern of sex discrimination" in the funding of varsity sports. The quick settlement by the courts in favor of the women is a real victory for equal rights.

The settlement calls for equal athletic programs for boys and girls as of next September. For the spring, the City has agreed to provide funding for teams in basketball, softball, track and field, tennis and volleyball. Basketball is already underway at Lee High where is has been funded for two years by Model Cities. The Lee women's team has been undefeated both this season and last. For volleyball there is a $3000 limit on the spring budget--$1000 for each high school.

Next fall there will also be teams in swimming, field hockey and gymnastics. For all eight sports, women students will receive equal treatment with men. Whatever equipment the schools provide for the men's teams will be provided for the women and the teams will have equal time on the courts and fields.

Why Women Sued

The suit for an equal varsity program for women was started because of the overwhelming interest of high school women in sports. For years many have been begging for teams. In the past, a few very dedicated women have coached for free or very little in order to provide teams. At Lee High Edwina Qualls has coached basketball and track and Diana Winus volleyball, softball and basketball. Deborah Chin has coached basketball and softball at Hillhouse. There have been no teams at Wilbur Cross.

Last spring the teachers submitted a budget request to the city. While the administration decided to spend $121,000 for men's varsity teams, it refused to allot money at all for women. The excuse given was not enough interest among women students and some vague fear of riotous behavior on the part of women's teams.

This fall a group of teachers and students decided to sue. Michael Avery, of Roraback, Williams and Avery, handled the case for the women with the help of Susan Kovac and Cookie Polan who did the basic legal research, drafted the complaint and gathered the evidence. The suit was filed December 3, 1973 and a settlement was reached with attorneys for the City in only five weeks.

Big Change Won

Susan Kovac explained the theory of an equal sports program. It does not mean that women will get every sport that men play. It does mean that women will get a full program of whatever teams they want and for which there is enough interest to make up a full team.

For the spring teams, coaching will be done by the present assistant coaches for men's teams. As of the fall, the coaching jobs will be posted and will go to the most qualified applicant regardless of sex. Some women have protested that only women should be hired to coach women's teams. The lawyer for the suit, Michael Avery, pointed out that this would be illegal. There is no qualification which excludes men from coaching women or visaversa. Another factor which the women students in the suit think is important is that hiring only women coaches might discriminate against women's teams. Prior discrimination in sports has been so great that there are not enough qualified women coaches to go around.

The quick, favorable decision has buoyed the spirits of women athletes. Even though they did not get everything they asked for immediately, Avery considers the decision a civil rights victory. As Avery points out, the courts move slowly: "This is a big change and done quickly. Courts do not provide revolution, only incremental change."

Community Notes

Impeachment Party Planned

A community impeachment party is being held on Friday, Jan. 25 at St. Paul's Church (corner of Chapel and Olive). Matilda Gibbs will be mistress of ceremonies. The entertainment starts at 8. There will be music, dancing, refreshments and the Watergate conspiracy game. Donation $2.00. The sponsor is the New Haven Coalition for Peace and Justice. For further information and reservations call: Lynn Hopson, 248-1115.

Pre- natal Services at Fair Haven Clinic

Starting January 21, 1974, the Fair Haven Health Clinic will begin offering pre-natal services to expectant women on Monday afternoons from 3:00 to 5:00 at the Christopher Columbus School, located on the corner of Grand and Blatchley Avenues.

The pre-natal services will be offered by the staff of the Fair Haven clinic in conjunction with the Nurse Midwifery Component of the Yale School of Nursing. Full pre-natal care will be provided at the clinic, with delivery at Yale New Haven Hospital.

Services are available to all pregnant women who are residents of Fair Haven. A fee for pre-natal and post-natal care will be charged on the basis of one's ability to pay. For further information, please call 777-3704.

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Will Labor Come Out Fighting in 1974?

by Matt Borenstein
Modern Times Staff

This year, unions representing over five million American workers will negotiate new contracts. After a year which saw prices rise over 8 per cent and wage increases limited to about five per cent, the battle lines for American workers are clearly drawn.

Economists who predicted a national recession before the fuel shortage are revising their predictions in terms of more unemployment and higher prices.

Real Wages Down

While American workers began to feel the pinch of a loss in real income (8-5%), American corporations saw huge profit increases. The year of 1973 saw few major strikes and limited wage demands by American workers.

There are about 70 million non-supervisory workers in the United States. Of the 70 million, about 20 million beong to unions (13 million in the AFL-CIO). Then why are the contracts of only five million so important? Even though less than one third of American workers are union members, union contracts set the pattern for all wages and working conditions. In effect, American unions represent all workers.

Steelworkers

The contract negotiations of the United Steelworkers of America with major steel companies might be important for the future of that union. Last year, the Steelworkers made ano strike-no lockout agreement with the major companies. If an agreement could not be reached at the bargaining table, the contract would be submitted to binding arbitration. Under this agreement, the workers would be guaranteed a minimum three per cent wage increase. In effect, the steelworkers have given up their right to strike. It remains to be seen whether they will get better than 3 per cent without a strike.

The mine workers contract expires next November. This confrontations with the coal companies could have a major national impact if the "energy squeeze" lasts and could give the mineworkers some extra economic muscle.

A lot of labor leaders will be carefully watching what happens to the Teamsters in their attempt to reopen contracts signed last summer. The teamsters claim that the increased fuel prices and lower speed limits have cut into truckers income. These new economic circumstances require a new contract.

According to George Meany, president of the AFL-CIO, "If the Teamsters pull this off, I think there could be a whole new bargaining ball game in 1974. Frankly we have wondered why the rank and file has not been more demanding on the wage side. But our experience tells us that it just takes one big breakthrough to open things up. And a Teamster reopener could be it."

The Political Front

Not all of the bargaining battles next year will be fought across a table or on a picket line. The Economic Stabilization Act, which gave Nixon the power to Phase the economy with wage controls, comes up for renewal next April. So far Economic Stabilization has meant that profits and prices rise faster than wages. Organized labor has a big stake in how the act is rewritten and in this election year, it could be a test of unions' political power.

Other priorities on the political front include a long range energy program, protection against exporting of jobs, national health insurance, pension protection, tax reform, Federal subsidies for mass transit and an effort to insure than environmental laws are not weakened by businesses seeking to profit from the fuel shortage.

Finally, many labor unions, including the AFL-CIO will try to get Congress to impeach Nixon.

Union Ends Long Strike Against Knights

by Susan Bucknell and Nancy Schwartz

The Knights don't learn; they don't want to. In fact, the Supreme Knight thinks "his girls" should be taught a lesson. Since returning to work December 31 the members of OPEIU Local 329 are being subjected to petty harrassment as punishment for going on strike. One over-eager supervisor sent out a memo to his department outlining new school rules--nobody may put on a coat before 4:40, no one may go to the bathroom more than three times a day, and some floors have been told that no talking is allowed during the 7½ hour working day.

The 335 members of the union returned to work at the Knights of Columbus building after a two month strike. The key issues in the strike were not only wages and working conditions, but also the definition of the bargaining unit.

The union won an increase in wages and night rates, a disability clause in the pension plan, and family coverage in the major medical plan. The wage increase is 7% for each of the next two years and the strike gained the right to reopen negotiations on this issue for the third year of the contract.

Some of the demands aimed at tightening the contract language and protecting the size of the bargaining unit were also won: part-time workers must now become union members after 60 days (previously the Knights avoided this rule by having part-time employees work just under the 15 hours per week that would qualify them as belonging to the bargaining unit.)

Key Issue Lost

But on the crucial issue of whether management could continue to establish supervisory (management) positions by hiring outside people or by promoting present employees to such positions, thus excluding them from the bargaining unit and eroding the number of union jobs, the Knights would not give in.

The decision to go back to work was made at a mass meeting of the union the day after Christmas at the Labor Temple on Water Street. The members voted 199-71 to return to work the following Monday. They expected the contract to be signed by Friday.

Over the weekend this decision was nearly reversed when it looked like the Supreme Knight was not going to sign the stipulation clause reinstating all strikers with full seniority and vacation rights which they had accumulated before the strike. (He would have preferred to start each striker again at year zero!) By Saturday the strike was on again. Union officials called over 300 members; they were ready to rally again for a mass picket on Monday. Radio and TV stations were called. Tempers were running short. The Supreme Knight backed down and signed.

Several people in the union think there are lessons for the future to be learned from the strike. Could more be gained? Should the union use different tactics? Clearly these are difficult questions, over which union members are torn; even on the last vote 70 members wanted to reject the offer and continue the strike.

Knights Tactics Tricky

Whatever the anwers, it must be realized that the members of the OPEIU were up against difficult odds. The Supreme Knight, protected and warm in his guarded office on the 20th floor of his brick and concrete tower, used every trick in the book against the strikers. He sent out long letters to the union membership modifying one of his positions and trying to discredit the union's leadership. Before the next to last vote he accused the negotiating board of being undemocratic by "swaying" the members and pressured them to sub m

Nick Heyer

K of C workers pause during their lunch break to talk to MT photographer. As they put it, their offices are wall to wall with backed up work. From left to right they are Julia Robertson, Kathey Foley, a member of the negotiating committee, and Clair Pluff, president of the union.

and pressured them to submit the contract offer to the membership without a recommendation. (Since when is it undemocratic to inform people and provide leadership?)

He also hired an expensive lawyer from Boston who was constantly there to shield him, even when union representatives came without their lawyer. As a final ploy, he threatened to replace strikers if they did not return to work. This was obviously an effort to scare all those who weren't aware either of their legal rights or their own strength into coming back to work.

Times are Hard

Furthermore, current economic and political conditions make it a difficult time to have a long strike. Fast inflation makes it harder than ever to lose your paycheck; the holiday seasons only made it worse. Many of the women are self-supporting and those that are married need their income to help support their families. The political situation is confused and elected officials seem less able to act than ever. Neither Guida, Ribicoff, Lee or Bishop Donnelly, all of whom were approached for support, could give public support to the strikers.

Looking back to their 1959 strike which lasted 13 weeks, Kathy Foley, a member of the negotiating committee, recalled that then there were mass meetings nearly everyday which sent out large groups of picketers to the line. She feels that such frequent meetings helped keep people together and informed as the strike went on.

But in this strike too there was spirit and solidarity, as any sight of the picket line on a windy or rainy day showed. Everyone signed up for four hours of picketing a week, receiving $20 a week from the International strike fund. They are grateful to the other unions and people and organizations who gave their support, from the local community and as far away as Kansas.

There were also feelings of militance, some acted upon, some only voiced. One day, as a delivery man going to another bank in the building crossed the picket line, a woman said, a bit wistfull, "I don't know? the West Haven teachers threw tomatoes at people crossing the picket line." "Not that I'm advocating that!" she added quickly. Some women do regret trying to behave like ladies during the strike.

See UNION, page 7

Editorial

Another Snow Job

It's often the little things that show what people - especially politicians- really think. So we can learn much about a Mayor like Guida and his Administration by considering the way snow plows "cover" the city of New Haven during and after storms.

According to New Haven density maps, more people are packed into the houses and streets of Fair Haven and the Hill neighborhoods than other city areas. Of course, the richer areas, along Orange Street and Whitney Avenue or in certain parts of Westville have far fewer people per block but a lot more money per block. That will explain why most blocks in Fair Haven and the Hill were **never** plowed (or sanded), while the plows managed to visit some of the streets in some of the "better" neighborhoods.

Snow and ice in the streets cause all kinds of damage to people's bodies and to their property. There is no excuse for sending plows to where the money is instead of where the people are. The real scandal of the snowplows in New Haven is what it says about the real loyalties of the Mayor and his Administration.

Nick Heyer

The driver of this car took a chance by sliding into this parking space on a side street in New Haven. Cars either get stuck on the left over ice and snow, or plowed in by one of the few plows that may come by.

Money Talks The Story Behind the Energy Rip-Off

by Rick Wolff

The fuel crisis is a fraud. Or, to be more exact, it is a colossal rip-off of one class of people by another class. The public opinion polls and some politicians tell us that more and more Americans suspect the fuel crisis is a fake.

But if there is no real shortage, how can we explain all the fuss, the rising gas and oil prices, the rationing plans? Why is this fake crisis – with its real rip-off – being run on the American people? This question needs an answer.

Want Greater Profits

Item No. 1. The big fuel companies want the higher profits that come from higher fuel prices. They want higher profits to keep up with the inflation and to build up a fund to use to find new, perhaps even more profitable sources of energy. What with price controls and public enthusiasm for protecting the environment and public disapproval of Nixon, the fuel industry's man, the fuel companies knew that the only way they were ever going to get big price boosts (not just 1 or 2 cents a gallon) was to create "a great national emergency." The fuel companies' public relations staffs went to work to fill radio and TV time and newspaper space with wild predictions of desperation. And then there were the shortages that suddenly came out of nowhere.

What Shortage?

Item No. 2. The so-called shortages. First the line was that the Arabs were to blame, but then Nixon said there would be shortages even if the Arabs kept up their shipments. Then the line was that there was just too little crude oil available. But now we have stories that full oil tankships are sitting off-shore not unloading. Why? Well, there are two reasons floating around. The first says **the tankers are waiting for oil prices to rise before they come in to shore to sell their oil cargoes.** The second reason, officially pushed by energy superchief William Simon, says there is no place to put the oil from the tankships. Why? Well – now get this – because the on-shore oil storage tanks are completely full; there's no room. Some shortage!

Since no real shortage exists, the fuel companies' public relations people are pushing the line that, you know, there is not an endless supply of oil and "we" are running out. Funny, the oil companies never before told people to use less oil to save on limited supplies, so why now? And anyway, oil supplies are limited in terms of decades, not in terms of the few weeks of our sudden energy crisis.

Many Industries Profit

Item No. 3. There is a good question in many peoples' minds. Why, they ask, are there no howls of anger and complaint from all the other big corporations that have to buy fuel for their businesses? The answer is simply that most major corporations will not be hurt. In fact, some will benefit enormously while others will just pass on their added fuel costs in higher prices to be charged the consuming public.

Two examples can illustrate this fact. First the automobile industry, the largest single industry in our economy. GM announces lay-offs of nearly 100,000 workers (to make it sound better, the new word is furloughs). Ford and Chrysler predict the same. Isn't the auto industry suffering? No.

Skyrocketing gasoline prices are a great benefit to GM, Ford, etc. Millions of Americans with big cars are being forced to get rid of them and buy new, small cars. Instead of the regular demand for new cars in the next few years, the auto industry will be faced with many, many more eager buyers for the small cars. After a year or so to change over most factory assembly lines to produce small instead of big cars, the auto industry will boom.

Increased Prices

The second example of why other corporations don't mind rising fuel prices is the aluminum industry. Aluminum pots and pans will be going up in price sharply soon. Aluminum manufacture uses much fuel and much electricity produced by burning fuel. The Federal Price Control is allowing aluminum companies to "pass through" their fuel cost increases to the public. And since the government does not inspect the books of these companies, there is little to prevent them from raising the prices even more than their fuel costs, just to make a little something extra for themselves. That's called "good business."

Workers Pay Price

Item No. 4. So if the fake shortages raise prices but the bit corporations don't get hurt, who does? We do. The great fuel rip-off is really a means to get the American working class to use less fuel, to pay much more for the fuel they still use and to pay more for everything else. In this way, the fuel crisis is the twin of the food crisis we had earlier in 1973. In both cases, the average American found his and her standard of living cut down by higher prices and "shortages." In the case of food, the purpose was to export food to solve our international economic problems (caused by the big corporations). In the case of fuel, the purpose is to raise profits of corporations all along the line, give a special boost to automobiles, and make sure industry gets all the fuel it wants, even while the fuel companies create the "shortage."

Legalized Black Market

Item No. 5. Besides the major corporations, rich families will also be strangely silent about the great fuel rip-off. The reason: the type of gas rationing now being planned. As reported in the press, each licensed driver will get coupons for 10 or so gallons a week. The driver can use them to buy gas or sell them, at any price obtainable, to someone else who will use them to get gas. So, the richer you are, the more coupons you can afford to buy to keep up the level of gas purchases. The poorer folk will have to walk, or take a public transportation system that will be crowded because the government has neglected public transportation for so long, or start stealing to make ends meet.

No Conclusion

There is no conclusion to this article because there is no conclusion (at least not in sight now) to the manner of ways used by business and government in the United States to boost profits at the expense of employees standards of living. There is no conclusion to the endless searching of business and government to discover clever ways to shift the burdens of difficult adjustments in the economy (like the US loss of gold, or like the Vietnam-war-caused inflation, etc.) from business to labor.

Of course, in the end we believe there is one conclusion: abolish the system of corporations vs workers which leads to the frauds and hardships this article has described. But before abolition comes, people need to be fully aware. That is what **Modern Times** is for.

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MODERN TIMES welcomes all comments and letters to the editors.

MODERN TIMES is published by the American Independent Movement (AIM) as its political organ. Work on **MODERN TIMES** is done by volunteers, both members and non-members of AIM. The political views of AIM are given in the editorial. We encourage contributions from the New Haven community in the form of articles and letters.

MODERN TIMES is a paper to tell the story of and by the people of New Haven. We don't get this kind of news from profit-making commercial papers. There is no place else in New Haven where the problems of working men and women are told by them instead of their bosses. There is no place else where the problems of employment and education, and housing and health care are told by the people who have to live with them.

This is the richest country in the world. Yet most of the wealth is used only by a few. We must all work together to claim the wealth we all helped to create. There would be no need to strike for paltry raises, waste our resources and labor on missiles and bombs, or waste the lives of our young men in wars like Vietnam. We would produce what we need, not what is profitable.

The American Independent Movement has been working since 1966 to get people together against the vested interests that run New Haven and the whole country. We want everyone to have good housing, good education, child care centers, recreation areas, decent health care, and decent jobs.

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Keith Handis/*the drummer/Ins*

Book Review Welfare: Big Stick, Little Carrot

by Steve Mick
Modern Times Staff

Regulating the Poor: the Functions of Public Welfare. New York: Pantheon Books, 1971. By Frances Fox Piven and Richard A. Cloward.

The welfare system is one of the most misunderstood and feared institutions in America, both by those who are in it and those who are not. People in it feel that it ought to be better; those out of it are convinced that it is a waste of tax money. In either case, there is a basic misunderstanding of the role of welfare in the larger economic system.

This is the main idea in a recent book, **Regulating the Poor: the Functions of Public Welfare**, by Frances Fox Piven and Richard A. Cloward. The authors argue that the real reason the welfare system exists is to stifle civil unrest and to enforce work. To support this view, they show that every society, but especially market societies (e.g., capitalist societies), must motivate people to work in hard times as well as good ones.

During a depression or a recession, people are out of work and are potentially a force for large-scale civil unrest. The government by expanding the relief rolls, takes people off the street, puts them to work, and stifles dissent.

During an economic boom, the relief rolls shrink, **but never disappear.** One of the major reasons for this lies in a basic dilemma facing many bosses: how to get people to do hard work but to keep wages down in order to keep profits up.

Welfare A Threat

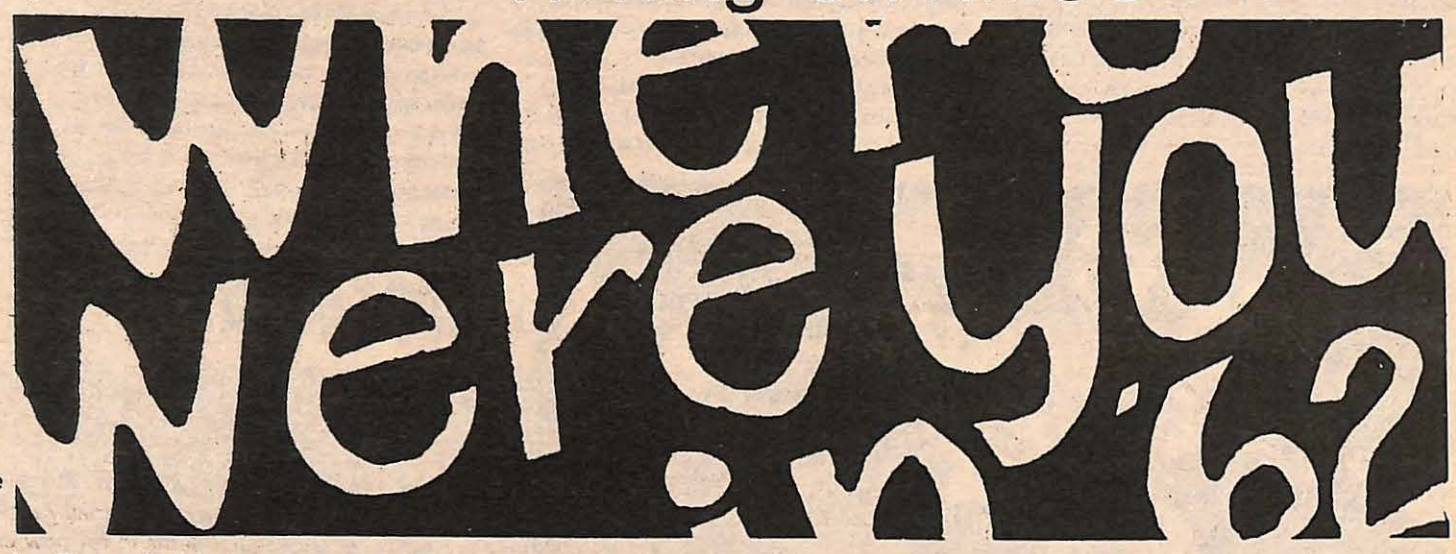
Welfare *acts as a threat to keep people* on the job. People will do almost any kind of work if they know that the alternative is a system which pays inadequate benefits, is often filled with the physically disabled, and is synonymous with poverty, misfortune, and "the dole."

In the words of the authors: "To demean and punish those who do not work is to exalt by contrast even the meanest labor at the meanest wages." Welfare acts as an awful reminder of what happens to a person should he or she not work.

In **Regulating the Poor,** Piven and Cloward draw upon examples of welfare from the Middle Ages, the Industrial Revolution of the 19th Century, the New Deal, the Urban Crisis of the 1960s. They show time and again how "a placid poor get nothing, but a turbulent poor sometimes get something," which reflects the point that in hard times the poor are more likely to organize and obtain some welfare relief, although "it is remarkable to see how few and how modest these concessions are, and how often they turn out to be merely symbolic."

Regulating the Poor clears the air of a lot of nonsense about welfare. Welfare is not intended to be humane, nor is it likely to be so in the future. Welfare is an institution which is not supposed to be liked. The revulsion employed people have to welfare is the precise effect which is intended. Welfare is the last ditch effort before armed intervention of the state to placate unrest due to massive upheaval in the economy; during prosperity, it is a goad, the stick behind the carrot, to motivate people to work.

Movie Review Writing On Time's Wall



by Renee Poirier
Modern Times Staff

If you remember DA's (duck's asses), '55 Chevies, sock hops, car-hops, Bill Haley and the Comets, gangs, Chinese fire drills, chinoes, letter-sweaters, and cruisin' around all night hoping an adventure would happen, then *American Graffiti* is a movie you have to see. It's got it all and more. Although the setting is a small town in California, the nostalgia the film feeds is universal.

Even if you are too old or too young to have been in the mainstream of "the scene" in '62, you will still enjoy the movie because it is a lot of fun. *American Graffiti* is one of the best movies to come out in quite a while, and worth the price and drive to Plasticville.

American Graffiti is a movie about the adventures, near-adventures, and mis-adventures that befall a group of teenagers one long September night in 1962. There is plenty of action, including a drag race, and lots of suspense. But, even more importantly, the movie is successful in carrying accross that unforgettable feeling of anticipation we all had back in our high school days. There is always the sense that something, anything can happen--even to a skinny, four-eyed, pimply faced kid nicknamed Toad--as long as he's got a good set of wheels and keeps cruisin' the strip.

One of the outstanding features of the film is the soundtrack. Throughout the movie the viewer is treated to the moldiest of the oldies, straight out of the golden vault of valuables, all accompanied by the silver voice of Wolfman Jack, live and in person.

A Serious Side

While most of the film is just a good, laugh-filled account of a night's escapades, there is a sober side to *American Graffiti.* The sweet nostalgia of high school days is tinged with sadness, not only for the end of an era, but for the beginning of a new, more serious one that includes the Vietnam War. The short post script is particularly effective in bringing out this aspect of the movie.

But don't worry, you'll leave the theater wanting to hop into your car, roll down the window, slink down low in the seat with your elbow strategically placed for maximum tuff effect, and go cruisin' around Savin Rock with the radio blasting.

Books Available On Labor Songs

by Hank Murray

(Ed. Note: This is the second of two articles on the music of American working people. The first part concerned the history of that tradition. This part is about the available literature on industrial and labor folk songs.)

The literature on industrial and labor folk songs isn't very extensive but most of it is excellent. People who are interested in music of workers can do some non-technical reading on their own in a few easily accessible books. These include: John Lomax, *American Ballads and Folk Songs;* John Greenway's pioneering work *American Folksongs of Protest;* George Korson's excellent books, *Coal Dust On The Fiddle* and *Minstrels of the Mine Patch;* Stan Hugill's *Shanties From the Seven Sea;* and Joyce Kornbluh's anthology of Wobbly material, *Rebel Voices.*

Many of the better known industrial ballads and labor songs have been recorded by modern artists like Pete Seeger, Joe Glazer, John Greenway, Mike Seeger, New Lost City Ramblers, Woody Guthrie and Merle Travis, and are available on several commercial record labels.

Some of these books and records can be found in the Music room on the second floor of the New Haven Public Library. Recordings by traditional southern musicians and vocalists who learned these songs as youngsters when they worked in the mines and mills can be heard on Folkways Records and the smaller Folk-Legacy Records.

The most interesting and enjoyable of all these books is Archie Green's *Only A Miner.* It is an unusual examination of nine traditional coal mining songs which appeared in various forms on commercially issued "race and hillbilly" record labels between 1925 and 1970. These songs are a living history of the coal miners' lives and work over the last hundred years. Archie Green's approach is a refreshing combination of field work, interviews, labor history old pictures and drawings, and traditional and unorthodox ballad scholarship. He shows that the commercial recording industry has not only helped to preserve traditional music but that some commercial music like Merle Travis' "Sixteen Tons" and "Dark as a Dungeon" has entered the folk tradition.

In addition, the insights and observations he has taken from his own experience as a worker makes the book a pleasure to read; Archie Green was a shipwright and carpenter for nearly thirty years before becoming a full-time labor folklorist. *Only A Miner* is published by the University of Illinois Press, unfortunately for $12.50, but it's worth it and would make a great present. Archie Green was in New Haven recently and taped a program for Yale Reports, a weekly, half hour radio feature which can be heard Sunday evenings at 7:30 on WTIC. This program will hopefully be aired in the near future.

Songs: A Valuable Heritage

The legacy in song which trade unionists before us have passed down is something we should all try to learn, preserve and pass on to others. The history of the struggles to organize unions in our own trades or industries and in others, and the fights for decent living and working conditions are facts which we need to know. One of the most enduring ways to do this is through song. We can read about a great strike or about the early days in the textile mills and the needle trades, but to hear "Ludlow Massacre," "The Death of Harry Sims," and "The Mill Was Made of Marble" is to share intimately the feelings which produced those songs. No book can really do that.

Education departments of some international unions (United Auto Workers, AFSCME, Rubber Worker) have put out a few albums of labor and industrial folk songs or have published song books. Union members should write to their international offices to find out what they have to offer and try to organize a monthly union meeting around the theme of the history and songs of their industry. The Education Department of the AFL-CIO is also a useful place to obtain information and material on labor history, and labor songs and films. Its address: Rm. 400, 815 16th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C.

School Notes What Is the Meaning of Education

by Ruth Hein

"Improving the quality of education" has been the slogan of reform groups for a long time now. There is general agreement that the present quality needs lots of upgrading. What is discussed less frequently, and seldom defined, is what we mean by "education."

On one level, of course, education means simply acquiring the skills and dollops of fact that constitute the public school curriculum: reading, long division, the American state capitals and possibly a little wood working. But, as has been pointed out by one Massachusets Institute of Technology professor, there is also the "hidden curriculum." He noted, for instance, that MIT's physics department engages less in teaching students to do physics than in training them to be successful physicists.

In the same way, public-school children are influenced into mental sets and ways of behavior which, in the long run, outweigh the importance of a set of knowledge units.

Socialization Begins Early

Children generally start kindergarten with a very genuine thirst for knowledge. They look forward to unlocking the secrets of the universe concealed behind those mysterious letters and numbers. Frequently this expectation keys them up to their liveliest and brightest.

More often than not, however, their first lesson concerns socialization: they must sit still. The teacher is kind but firm in explaining that not until everyone is quietly seated, hands folded on the tabletop, will learning begin.

Besides social control (imposed by the authority figure of the teacher, not evolved from inside the child), the elementary hidden curriculum emphasises the somewhat contradictory values of team work and competition. In some projects, children are encouraged to work together, to help each other, to respect each other's needs — always within the limits set by the teacher.

Grades an Issue

At other times, teachers foster antagonism by stressing success and failure in letter grades, by the way they ask for and respond to children's answers to questions, and by encouraging children to tattle on their schoolmates. It is not uncommon for a teacher who has to leave the room to appoint one of the students to report on the behavior of others in the interim.

The teachers, of course, are simply reflecting the prevailing values of the society. As Jules Henry notes in **Culture Against Man**: "American classrooms, like educational institutions everywhere, express the values, preoccupations, and fears found in culture as a whole. School . . . must train the children to fit the culture (or the society) as it is."

Teachers Influence Socialization

The socialization of children which constitutes the hidden curriculum of public schools — is also deeply influenced by teachers' expectations of the adult situation their pupils will encounter. Charles E. Silberman, in **Crisis in the Classroom**, cites a set of interviews with various teachers.

Asked, "What kinds of things do you think these children should be getting

see OPEN CLASSROOM, page 7

Brass Tacks
It Takes a Wealthy Thief To Make Crime Pay

by Mike F. Holodnak

The guardians of the system are at it again. When they're not zealously jailing muggers, petty thieves and prostitutes, they're suddenly stumbling over each other, making more political points for themselves by prosecuting the small gas station operators who engage in price gouging.

Mind you, this is no defense of muggers, thieves or price gougers. But why in blue blazes aren't the oil, auto and food monopolists, who are the biggest example-setters for muggers and thieves, ever prosecuted and jailed for price gouging?

Instead, these monopolists, which yearly gouge billions of dollars illegally from consumers are, not only not prosecuted, but are praised, worshipped and fawned over by the news media, politicians and the public.

Of course when the rich pick our pockets, it's not called stealing. The laws, created by their bought-and-paid-for flunkies in Washington, make stealing and evading taxes legal, as long as it's done in very large volumes. It's only the small-time, petty crooks, who stupidly try to immitate the rich, who get thrown into jail.

Safety War

And even when the rich kill for profits, they merely pay a piddling sum for compensation.

Last year, for example, Dr. Sidney Wolfe, director of Ralph Nader's Health Research Group, likened the health and safety in the work place to a "war" where every year 18,000 workers are killed outright, 100,000 die from occupational diseases, 200,000 are permanently disabled, and 2.2 million are seriously injured.

Yet, big biz and the Tricky Dicky administration are trying to cripple the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 which was at least trying to put an end to this unnecessary carnage.

Now that the monopolies and the Nixon administration had created the food and oil crises, a lot more greedy speculators will suddenly become millionaires. Which means that, every time a new millionaire is created, several thousand hard working people will be getting less with which to feed and clothe their families.

Poor Get Poorer

But the biggest insult of all is the fact that, not only are the rich getting richer, but that we, the ordinary taxpayers, are the ones who are financing the entire swindle. In the 1940's workers paid 30 % of all federal income taxes and the corporations paid 70 %. Today, the corporations pay only 23 % and the workers are paying the wopping sum of 77 %!

The system is corrupt through and through and we all must get out of the habit of defending it. We must defend the country by opposing the system that is systematically destroying this country. That means we must make laws that make thievery in high places illegal so that workers would not have to kill themselves for a living. If everyone had the opportunity to make an honest and decent living we would have, not only a decent environment to live in, but also safe streets to walk on.

Simple? Hell no. But we should try like hell to achieve it.

Campaign Givers Get Money'sWorth

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too, and share the same values as the rich. Both Arthur T. and Bartholomew are real estate dealers. Other city officials wait until they leave public offic before taking jobs with the private companies they used to give contracts to.

Second, because they take advantage of their insider position to make money. Congress Printers, owned by City Clerk Leon Medvedow, does all city printing (and incidentally, printed Esposito's campaign literature), Arthur T.'s real estate firm is involved in city business--Chapel Mall, 770 Chapel Street, and the golden elephant on Wall and Church.

20 Years of One Party Rule

Third, and most important, they cannot afford to lose an election. Not because this would mean the loss of the power, status, and wealth that they are accustomed to, though it would surely mean that. But, because after twenty years of uninterrupted Democratic Party rule, the accumulation of scandals, shake-downs, shady deals, pay offs, rip-offs, and rake-offs are enough to send all of the top leadership and a good chunk of the lower echelons to State Prison. The recently uncovered voting fraud in New Haven is the tip of a very large and very cold ice-berg and no one wants to uncover any more, not Police Inspector Pastore who supposedly conducted an investigation, nor States Attorney Markle, who appointed an 86 year old retired judge to conduct a two-day, closed-door, one-man investigation, and not the supposedly crusading Jackson family newspapers.

The problem for New Haven working people is how to eliminate this cozy coalition of businessmen and politicians who milk the city coffers for their private advantage.

GOP No Solution

One false solution is to elect Republicans to city office. Tricky Dick and Tough Tommie indicate the policies GOP officeholders would follow--and their willingness to accept money for favors. John Esposito's blatantly racist campaign reveals that he is no different. And, no different from the Democrats either. Why was Alphonse Spadaro, GOP Town Chairman present during the Aldermanic Caucus of the Democratic Party? The local republicans do their part in re-electing democratic mayors, and receive their pay-offs and favors in return. They're not interested in rocking the boat either.

Another false solution is reform of campaign financing. Instead of freeing politicians from corporate control, it would merely give them another source of campaign funds. In addition, it would permanently freeze out minor parties who wouldn't have access to public campaign funds.

Capitalism, Corruption, and Politics

A true solution rests on a realistic understanding of the nature of the problem. The problem does not lie with corrupt politicians or greedy businessmen, although there are more than enough of each specie around. Instead, the problem lies in an economic system that allows private control over the society's economy, control by a relatively few wealthy individuals over the lives of most of the rest of us. These corporate rich will use their wealth to maintain their position, including controlling and influencing political parties. Until the power of these corporations is broken, their control will continue. And as long as political parties are filled with individuals who agree with the corporate view of the world, regardless of their different ethnic or educational backgrounds, politicial parties will allow themselves to be dominated by corporate wealth.

A starting point for dismantling this system is by creating an independent party (As presented in Modern Times Editorial, December 1-15, "Building a New Party").

When the recent New Haven voting scandal broke out, the **Journal Courier** and **Register** were quick to remind its readers that similar scandals occurred twenty years ago. Political scandals in fact do occur with a dismaying regularity, and we can safely predict that in twenty years reports of yet more scandals will emerge. Unless the underlying economic and political conditions which allow such scandals to take place are removed, they will continue.

No Experience Needed for Meskill Choice

At a time when we need the best possible person to fill the key position of State Health Commissioner, Governor Meskill in his recent appointment of Dr. Douglas S. Lloyd has chosen a doctor who does not even meet the basic requirements for the job as specified by law in Section 19-2 of the General Statutes.

The State Commissioner of Health serves both as administrative head of the State Health Department and as chairman of the Public Health Council. At this time when cutbacks are being made in every area of social service it is especially important that the Health Commissioner be a person who can fight to obtain adequate funding for state hospitals and for regional centers for the retarded, many of which are already understaffed. The commissioner must also have administrative skills and experience if he is to keep the central and regional offices of the state Department of Health running smoothly.

The 33 year-old Dr. Lloyd received his medical degree from Duke University in 1972. Since that time he has remained at Duke serving a residency in family practice. At this point in his career it is not possible that Dr. Lloyd could be "experienced in actual practice of his profession, skilled in sanitary science and experienced in public health administration" as required by the law.

Nothing New

This is not the first time that the governor has ignored legal requirements in making state appointments. He named John Doyle as the first executive director of the new hospital cost control commission although he did not have the experience in hospital administration the law requires.

But the appointment to the office of state health commissioner which has long been considered one of the key non-political, top professional jobs in the state government is too serious a matter for us to allow the governor to continue to act without regard for the law.

Because the legislature is in recess the newly-designated commissioner can assume his office prior to confirmation by the legislature. We can not allow the governor to use this trick in timing to force the legislature to confirm a candidate who is not legally qualified.

Opposition Taking Form

Opposition to the appointment is being organized by the Connecticut State Medical Society. Acting upon the request of over 400 members of the Fairfield County Medical Association the Council of the State Medical Society reviewed Dr. Lloyd's professional education, training and experience. The Council wrote to the governor to obtain information of the appointment and its legality "directly from the appointive source."

On November 2 Dr. Sidney Cramer president of the Society and Dr. David Grendon chairman of the Council met with the governor in his chambers to discuss Dr. Lloyd's appointment. Even after this meeting the Council concluded that there was grave doubt that Dr. Lloyd's appointment satisfies the legal requirements for experience in medical practice and public health administration.

Asked for Investigation

The Council has written to the members of the legislature calling upon them to undertake a full investigation when the appointment comes up for confirmation at the ne next session.

We do not know what motivated the governor to show such flagrant disregard for the law and for the welfare of the citizens of this state when he chose Dr. Lloyd for the appointment. It is unclear whether the governor's connections with this man and his family from Suffield were those of personal friendship or political convenience. We hope that the legislature will insist that a more qualified person be found for the job.

Open Classroom

continued from page 6

out of school?" a fifth-grade teacher in a low-income black school answered, "First of all, discipline. They should learn that when an older person...gives a command that they should respond, they should listen."

A teacher in a middle-income school, on the other hand, said, "The most important thing is to be able to get along with one another ... And secondly, the *intellectual* development of the child ... That they become decent and intelligent human beings, that's the most important as fair as I am concerned."

Punishments

The same survey found that teachers in poor neighborhoods are more likely to impose punishments (rote writing, for example), while middle-class children are more apt to be controlled purely by the teachers' expression of praise or disapproval. "They want me to like them for something so it usually works like magic," is the way the teacher put it.

Thus, within one society, children are trained to be useful adults in very differing sectors of the political and labor areas.

There are, of course, open classrooms, alternate school, even whole school systems that react against the pervasive social mores. Such teachers and administrators are apt to emphasize learning as a "fun" activity, their lessons consist of "games" and "play."

If they totally abandon discipline, however, they prevent children even more thoroughly from encountering real learning than does the strict approach.

Governments Effect School Systems

It has been pointed out that the school system of any country will change its approach as there is a change in the general philosophy of government. Thus, under Lenin, Soviet schools were very receptive to the American concept of progressive education, while Stalin's rise to power signaled a return to an authoritarian approach. The interest in the open classroom (or integrated day) schooling in the United States at this time would seem to indicate an effort toward a new overall view of the citizen.

Open classrooms do not abandon students to their own devices; there is guidance, structure, lawful discipline. But there is also a respect for students as people, as equal members of society, as individuals whose contributions are worth fitting into the social web.

Let it snow, etc.

Nick Heyer

From the corner of Elm and Chapel, downtown New Haven looked deserted after the second major snowstorm that hit New Haven. Above, the New Haven Green provides us with a choice of two equally pleasant strolls in the snow.

K of C Union Still Strong

Continued from page 3

Now that people are back at work, it is clear that the Knights were hurt by the strike. The backlog of work suggests that they did not have as much help during the strike as rumors alleged. Customers' calls who were never even told that the workers were out! The Knights are dealing with the backlog by enforcing speed-up rather than paying overtime: they are cutting breaks to a minimum, threatening people who are late, and not allowing personal phone calls. They are also engaging in constant watching; in fact, in one department the supervisor has reorganized the desks so that he can oversee the women lined up in front of him.

The union is still a force to be reckoned with. During the 8 weeks, the women and men worked together at the union office and on the picket lines, developing new friendships and respect for each other, overcoming some old factions. These strengths will carry over now that they are back at work. The union president, Claire Pluff, the Executive Board, and the members are determined that there will be no reprisals. The lessons learned from the strike can only make them stronger in the future. The Knights better watch out.

AIM Says: End the Slippery Crisis

continued from page 1

they're "making us an offer we can't refuse."

Must we give in to the big oil companies? Can we do anything to break their power over fuel prices, the environment and the economy as a whole? We can't afford not to. At the rate things are going, gas will soon cost $1.00 a gallon, fuel oil will be hard to come by, breathing air will be a health hazard and millions of workers will lose their jobs, victims of the fuel shortage.

The battle against the oil companies will be long and hard. In the long run, the best thing we could accomplish would be to take control of the oil industry away from the millionaires who have it now. Under a better social system, major industries like oil could be run for the benefit of everyone rather than for the profit of a few. Of course, such a fundamental change cannot happen overnight, nor can it happen without the hope and drive of huge numbers of American working people.

Programs for Action

For the moment, there are some more immediate measures we can demand and fight for. Here are some possible programs for action:

- **NO GASOLINE PRICE HIKES** If we really can't get enough gas from the oil companies then everyone should be entitled to a certain amount at a reasonable price. A much higher price or a stiff gas tax would prevent all but the rich from buying gas at all. Rationing would at least permit everyone to buy a small amount.
- **NO SCHOOL CLOSINGS** When the military needed 20 million barrels of oil, the Government made the oil companies sell it to them. Our children's education is more important than the military. If a school district is short of fuel, the oil companies should be forced to sell it to them.
- **NO INCREASE IN UTILITY RATES** Using the "energy crisis" as an excuse, gas and electric companies are now asking for rate hikes. The Southern Connecticut Gas Company recently got permission for a 17% rate increase - a big chunk of which went directly to their stockholders. It's time we put an end to this thievery. If private business can't or won't provide utilities at a reasonable price, the state should do it instead.
- **NO ROLLBACK OF POLLUTION STANDARDS** For the sake of our health, it is urgent that the government stand firm on all pollution and environmental standards. The electric power and oil interests must not be permitted to poison the air or pollute Long Island Sound because of the "energy crisis" or any other excuse.
- **ADEQUATE MASS TRANSIT** Buses and trains use much less fuel per passenger than private cars. They are also safer and less polluting. Nearly every country in Europe runs a fast, cheap, efficient system of mass transit. It's time our local, state and federal governments began to do the same.
- **EXPOSE THE HOAX** The state and Federal governments ought to conduct public investigations into the "energy crisis." Let's have a look at the books of the oil companies to see what riches they have reaped out of our discomfort. Then we should require these companies to pay compensation to anyone made ill or laid off because of the fuel shortage.

The American Independent Movement (AIM) is prepared to fight for these or other programs dealing with the fuel shortage. But we can't do it alone. We need your help. Please let us know if you are interested in working on any of these programs or if you have other suggestions of your own. It's up to all of us. If we do nothing — nothing will get done and the oil millionaires will get their way again.

On The Job Psychiatric Nurse Tends the Mind

as told to Modern Times
by Jill Nelson

I am a Psychiatric Liason Nurse Clinician working at Yale New Haven Hospital. Unlike most psychiatric nurses who work on psychiatric floors, I work with the nursing staffs in two acute medical units (the intensive care unit and the coronary care unit) and in an experimental chemotherapy unit for cancer patients.

In the hospital I work in several different ways: 1) I talk directly with patients and help them deal with psychological problems they are encountering; 2) I aid nurses in giving better nursing care by helping them understand their patient's problems; and 3) I teach graduate nursing students specializing in psychiatric nursing at the Yale School of Nursing.

I see my job in large part as preventive medicine. If I can give help to nurses dealing with patients or to the patient directly when some need is shown, I can often help prevent major psychological problems for both staff and patient later on.

Serving Patients Directly

Hospital staff, either nurses or doctors will often refer patients to me. They will say, for example, that they are concerned about a patient who has been crying and think that the patient might be worried about something and needs to talk. At other times, I know the patients on a floor myself and will, on my own initiative, go in and talk with patients.

I am often asked to make a general psychosocial assessment of patients with heart problems who are being evaluated for surgery. I try to learn how they perceive their disease; how they see the future; what kind of cultural, family and social background they come from; how they are dealing psychologically with the diagnosis, tests, hospitalization and with the possibility of surgery. I try to evaluate *what kinds of problems the person is facing and the appropriate support in solving those problems. And, I try to learn what* the patient's reaction might be if nothing *can be done to correct the disease and it* is essentially terminal.

Sometimes a long standing problem will be the thing that has made a patient physically sick and has brought them into the hospital. In this kind of case psychological support is an essential part of the care. For example, one woman I know is in her late sixties and has a heart problem. However, all of her hospitalizations have occured after fights with her forty year old alcoholic son who lives with her. When he drinks and refuses treatment she both worries about him and gets angry with him; but he is also very good to her and she needs him, since he does all the grocery shopping and takes care of her. After their fights she often gets chest pain. It usually isn't serious but the hospital staff is always concerned because she might have had a real heart attack. She's an example of someone who really needs supportive psychological treatment to help her deal with some of her problems which often lead to hospital admission.

Liason With Nursing Staffs

One of the units where I work is Hunter 5, an experimental chemotherapy unit for cancer patients where everyone knows that they have cancer. These patients know that the therapy may or may not help. They also know that the side effects of the therapy will make them miserable, but it's the only chance they have.

On that unit I work primarily with the nursing staff and their problems dealing with patients that they know are terminally ill. These nurses often see patients from the time that they are diagnosed until the time of their death. They see the patient come into the hospital in a crisis, get better, go home for a while and then come back again. Hunter 5 becomes another home for many of the patients and long term relationships between nurses and patients are usually established. Nurses on that unit have many problems in knowing how to care for terminally ill patients and how to deal with their own feelings about death. These issues are discussed in conference between me, as consultant, and the nursing staff.

I am also available to nursing staffs throughout the hospital for consultation on particular needs and problems in delivery of nursing care that arise. For example, sometimes a nursing staff will become particularly concerned about suicidal or depressive tendencies in a patient and not know how to handle it; or a nursing staff will have strong feelings about the way certain procedures are being handled on the floor by the medical staff. I am available to give help where I can.

I see myself as helping nurses take a step back from the immediate procedures in which they are involved. Instead nurses should see their patients feelings, look at their behavior and their reactions to illness and hospitalization. In a hospital most nurses act as handmaidens to the medical staff. This is due partly to the demands of a hospital where physical needs are immediate, partly to the lack of adequate staff and lack of adequate time. However, most nurses are not encouraged by either nursing or medical staffs to fall into a different pattern. I try to give nurses the support and the verbal ability to interact more with patients and to show them that they are not overstepping their boundaries in doing so.

This "liason-consultation" aspect of my job is based on the premise that nurses should be able to consult with each other and, as a profession, use their own resources rather than go to doctors to talk about how to do nursing care. Some people believe that onlydoctors can be "specialists." I am a trained specialist in psychiatry, and rather than have a psychiatrist come in to give a weekly conference for the nurses, I am available for consultation. In general, I also think that nurses relate to other nurses better—both because they are in the same profession and also because they are usually the same sex.

My Training and Interest in Psychiatry

During nursing training I found psychiatry the most interesting area in nursing. What people think, the way they react, and their whole perspective on the world is fascinating to me. And I find that people are so different from myself. I come originally from a very homogenous culture in North Dakota. Everyone there is white, Scandanavian with the same culture, background and values, doing the same things, and that's a bore. And to find people that don't have the same values but that are perfectly happy and live a very nice life—that to me is fascinating.

My training for this job, which I've been doing now for a year, comes primarily from graduate school at Yale U. School of Nursing where I received intensive grounding in psychiatric theory, in diagnostic and treatment modalities, in individual pschotherapy and group therapy and in some assessment and evaluation.

My job is an example of one of the new expanded roles for nurses. As doctors are getting more specialized, someone is needed to fill in the gaps, for example, preventive medicine and general practice. Doctors in the hospital still have the power to make most decisions and, in some sense, nurses will do and can do everything that doctors are willing to give up. There are also economic reasons for hiring nurses for some jobs since they command lower salaries than doctors.

However, rather than see it all negatively, there are important ways in which nurses and doctors can really cooperate for the benefit of the patient. Patients often complain that doctors don't really consider the feelings of the patient. Doctors explain that they often get caught up in a technical aspect of the disease. They also say (particularly the surgeons) that if they thought of the patient as a person they wouldn't be able to do the things that they have to do to the patient's body. That's where cooperation really comes in. The nurse can go in and listen to the patient and fulfill those psychological and personal needs while the doctor performs the necessary medical tasks. Thus, the doctor and nurse working closely together can then give all aspects of care that the patient needs.

Since I am in a new position, it often takes a while for both nurses and doctors to figure out how I fit in. I think that the nurses like the input and support that I can give. By now the nurses are talking about their patients more; they come to conferences that we have; and they are increasingly open about their own reactions to patients.

The doctors are more confused. The fact that I don't wear a nurses uniform, that I am involved with several different medical services and that I talk to doctors as equals confuses them. I hope that what I do and the way I act will help to change some of the image of nursing as a second-class medical profession—but its a lonely kind of task and sometimes its discouraging.

On Death and Dying

I often talk with people who have a terminal illness. In those instances I let the patient raise the issues that are concerning them. All patients are at different points in dealing with their illness, e.g. What's it going to be like for the rest of my life? Am I going to be miserable and in pain? Will I be able to do things? What's the point of doing anything if I know that I am going to die? Is there any hope? For patients who are actually dying, the questions usually are: Will I die alone? How will I die? Will there be pain?

A patient who is dying usually has a lot of concern for the family. I work a great deal with the family, since the patient is usually too weak to be supportive. And the patient often feels relieved that I am taking that responsibility.

I think the goal of nursing in dealing with people that are dying is to let people die the way that they want to die. Personal patterns of dealing with stress or crisis are unchangeable at critical times and it is important for the nurse to be comfortable with the different ways in which people react to death.

Adequate Medical Care

In general I think that people get fairly good medical care at Yale New Haven Hospital but there's so much more that most patient's need. The problems people have are not all medical—people in social dilemmas, family dilemmas, personal dilemmas. I wonder if that doesn't reflect more on society than on medical care.

Photo courtesy of Jill Nelson

Jill Nelson

There's Too Much Going On Not To Know About

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